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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: IS KPKO LE MOPS PREL PTER

SUBJECT: MGLE01: PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE PROVIDES ITS
STATISTICS ON ISRAELI AIR, SEA, AND LAND VIOLATIONS

¶1. (SBU) On February 6, the Office of Prime Minister Fouad Siniora provided the Embassy with official GOL statistics on Israeli air, sea, and land violations of Lebanese territory since 2000. According to the PM's Office's statistics, 2005 was the year with the most Israeli air violations. The statistics were compiled by the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and are detailed below.

¶2. (SBU) The PM's Office broke down the number of air violations by type of aircraft: warplane, reconnaissance, or helicopter. It counted sea violations as those incidents in which Israeli vessels entered Lebanese territorial waters. Land violations were divided into air strikes (air raids that resulted in bombing), ground strikes (firing of tank rounds, infiltration, or constructing military posts on Lebanese territory), and "aggressions" (military non-building construction on Lebanese territory and threatening with weapons). (Comment: Most of the ground violations against "military posts" are presumably Israeli strikes on Hizballah and Palestinian positions. The military construction "aggressions" would include Israeli construction in the Shebaa Farms, since GOL considers that area to be Lebanese territory. End comment.)

¶3. (SBU) For 2000, the PM's Office claimed 149 air violations (87 warplane, 34 reconnaissance, and 28 helicopter), 11 sea violations, and 57 ground violations (24 air strikes, 21 ground strikes, and 12 "aggressions"). The numbers for 2001 were 459 air violations (346 warplane, 68 reconnaissance, 45 helicopter), 39 sea violations, and 51 ground violations (10 air strikes, 19 ground strikes, and 22 "aggressions"). In 2002, the statistics were: 378 air violations (212 warplane, 128 reconnaissance, and 38 helicopter), 49 sea violations, and 65 ground violations (19 air strikes, 30 ground strikes, and 16 "aggressions"). In 2003, there were: 534 air violations (237 warplane, 210 reconnaissance, and 87 helicopter), 157 sea violations, and 153 ground violations (21 air strikes, 85 ground strikes, and 47 "aggressions"). In 2004: 529 air violations (195 warplane, 236 reconnaissance, and 98 helicopter), 288 sea violations, and 234 ground violations (22 air strikes, 154 ground strikes, and 58 "aggressions"). For 2005, the PM's Office counts 696 air violations (171 warplane, 445 reconnaissance, and 80 helicopter), 215 sea violations, and 226 ground violations (42 air strikes, 141 ground strikes, and 43 "aggressions"). In the month of January 2006, the office counted 37 air violations (13 warplane, 17 reconnaissance, and 7 helicopter), 10 sea violations, and 14 ground violations (0 air strikes, 11 ground strikes, and 3 "aggressions").

¶4. (SBU) COMMENT. It is difficult to verify the numbers

provided to us by Siniora's office. MFA North Americas Desk Officer Ghady el-Khoury, assured us that only air violations confirmed by the LAF were noted. Civilian sightings were not included. UNIFIL only tracks air violations in its area of responsibility in southern Lebanon, so its numbers are incomplete, if perhaps more authoritative for the area UNIFIL monitors. End comment.

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